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ENGLAND'S PROTEST

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LONDON :

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J. H. 1829

ENGLAND'S PROTEST

IS

ENGLAND'S SHIELD, FOR THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S.

BY

THE REV. HUGH M^cNEILE, A.M.

RECTOR OF ALBURY, SURREY;

AND CHAPLAIN TO HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

"Her sun has gone down while it was yet day."—JER. xv. 9.

"And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is
come to pass, ye may believe."—ST. JOHN xiv. 29.

SECOND EDITION.



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ENGLAND'S PROTEST

IS

ENGLAND'S SHIELD.

the crash of our noble edifice, prove utterly unavailing? Well, a voice of witness for the truth of God must still be raised, and England's doom be sounded in her ears.

Almighty God so arranged and overruled the circumstances of the lives of his servants of old, Abraham, David, and others, as that their histories, and the language which they were influenced to make use of, should supply a rich fund of application to the experience of all the elect people of God in every age. This is what makes the book of Genesis, and the book of Psalms, as truly and personally applicable now, as they were when first written.

So also with respect to the nations of Israel and Judah. Their histories were so arranged and overruled by the Lord of all the earth, as to supply a counterpart, a sort of rehearsal, upon a small scale, of the fore-ordained histories of the nations of Christendom. And the language which the Prophets were taught by the Holy Ghost to use, respecting Israel and Judah, is most truly applicable now to the nations with whom we have to do. Thus, in the Old Testament, we have a language supplied for the personal experience of individual Chris-

tians, and also a language supplied for God's dealings with the nations of Christendom : and thus, whether as sinners, or as Englishmen, whatsoever things were written afore-time were written for our learning.

Look back then upon Israel and Judah, as our key.

Israel, for her abominable idolatries, had been severely scourged, in the righteous providence of God. Intestine broils had led to the cutting off of one royal family after another ; Samaria had been visited by famine ; at last, an invading army, under Shalmaneser, the Assyrian, was raised up, and commissioned by the Lord of Hosts, to sweep through the whole kingdom of Israel with the besom of destruction and desolation. Thus were the ten tribes visited with the national plagues of the wrath of God. I say national plagues, because nations having no existence *as nations* in eternity, must receive their national rewards or punishments in time : this, however, not interfering with the eternal salvation or damnation of the individual inhabitants of those nations.

After Israel's national calamities had come upon her to the uttermost, Judah was still pre-

served in prosperity, chiefly, as it appears, because she adhered to the royal dynasty of the family of David, to whom the promises of God's favour were made. Her kings continued to be of this family in unbroken succession. She had divine warnings in the history of her sister Israel, and in the language of her own prophets. For a season, she took warning, and served the Lord her God. Invading armies attempted her destruction, encouraged by their success elsewhere. The great Assyrian, the conqueror of Israel, came up against Judah, and sent an insulting letter to Hezekiah the king, saying, "Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the King of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard what the Kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?" Hezekiah appealed to the Lord God of his fathers, the God of David and Solomon; and this is the word which the Lord spake against Sennacherib, the king of Assyria:—"The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, concerning the King of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. For I will defend this city, to save it, for my own sake, and for my servant David's sake." Thus was Judah defended and preserved from the various and heavy judgments which fell upon Israel. Soon, however, she proved ungrateful for these blessings, and committed the very evils for which Israel had been so signally punished. The example of her fallen sister was lost upon her; the exhortations of her own true prophets were disregarded; the anger of her long-suffering God was incurred; and the time drew near, when she was to drink into the cup of bitterness, *i. e.* of national degradation.

Then it was that Jeremiah lived, and prophesied according to the purpose of God, thus revealed to him:—"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest

forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For behold I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls, against the whole land; against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee."

My fellow-countrymen, read with me the 13th and 14th chapters of Jeremiah.

The prophet was desired to take a linen girdle, and bind it upon his loins; then to take it off, and go and hide it in a hole by the bank of the Euphrates. After some time he was desired to go and take it thence; he went and took it, when behold the girdle was marred; it was good for nothing! "Then the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord: After this manner will I mar the pride

of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem. This evil people, which *refuse to hear my words*, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing. For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of *Israel*." Here reference is made to God's merciful dealings with the whole twelve tribes at the first. Long, however, before this was spoken, the ten tribes of Israel had been cut off; the prophecy therefore concentrates upon the remaining kingdom of Judah, now to be warned. "And the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord: that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear. Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word: Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine; and they, not perceiving any important application of the words, shall sneeringly reply, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine? Then shalt thou say unto them: Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will fill all the inhabitants of this

land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness. I will infatuate them, that they shall not perceive what is for their national interest : and I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord : I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them." Had the prophet's commission closed with these words, the case of Judah would have been absolutely hopeless ; but he was taught of the Holy Ghost to proceed in a strain of expostulation, which implied, that the threatened calamity, though it might not be wholly averted, yet might be suspended in its fall, by their timely attention to the divine warning. " Hear ye and give ear, be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. But, if ye will not hear it," I will not threaten, I will not triumph over your deplorable infatuation, I will not forget who hath made me to differ ; no, I have drunk suffici-

ently into the spirit of my master, who has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, that "my soul shall weep in secret places." I will not, indeed, pharisaically raise a doleful whine about the matter in your presence; but "in secret places my soul shall weep for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive." He proceeds: "Say unto the king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall come down, even the crown of your glory. The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open them." The cities of Judah shall be desolate, here called the cities of the south, in reference to the invading desolators, who were coming from the north, as it follows, "Judah shall be carried away captive, all of it; it shall be wholly carried away captive. Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the north: where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?" Where, O King Zedekiah, where is the flock that I entrusted to thy care, saith the Lord, and for the protection of which thou art accountable unto me? It was a beautiful flock, with every advantage, and

opportunity, and blessing, that any people could have; and thou, O King, thou hadst warning, concerning their captivity, to humble thyself, and give glory to God, remembering whose minister thou art, but you refused to hear: where, where is thy flock? "What wilt thou say, when the Lord shall punish thee? for thou hast taught them to be captains, and as chief over thee:" by making ungodly alliances with them, seeking their help in your national difficulties, instead of using faithfully your internal resources, and putting trust in your God, who has promised to protect you. You have invited the Chaldeans among you, and shown them how to conquer you: "shall not sorrows take thee, as a woman in travail? And if thou say in thine heart, wherefore come these things upon me?" The answer is, "For the greatness of thine iniquity are thy skirts discovered, and thy heels made bare." Your iniquity has now become a sort of second nature to you: you cannot shake it off. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?—then may ye do good, who are accustomed to do evil; therefore will I scatter thee, as the stubble that passeth away by the wind

of the wilderness. This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the Lord, because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood." Then the kindling compassion of Him, who in wrath remembers mercy, again implies a hope that all was not yet inevitably lost. "O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?" The next strain alludes to the dearth, during which Judah had a specimen of what the Lord could do with her. "Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground, and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up. And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters; they came to the pits and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads. Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed: they covered their heads. Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it because there was no grass. And the wild asses did stand in the high places; they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass."

The prophet then earnestly entreats the Lord, on behalf of the people, to spare them ; but the Lord said unto him, " Pray not for this people for their good ; when they fast I will not hear their cry ; and when they offer burnt-offering and an oblation, I will not accept them : but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence."

The prophet further pleads on their behalf, that their teachers had led them astray. " Ah, Lord God, behold the (false) prophets say unto them, ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine ; but I will give you assured peace in this place. Then the Lord said, The prophets prophesy lies in my name, and I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them : they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land : By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed ;" neither shall their guilt exculpate the people who have received and neglected the faithful warnings of my true

messengers; but they "shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, because of the famine and the sword, and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them."

All this language, and all the circumstances connected with it, are, as we have said, of transferable application, and may be, and ought to be adopted now by the ministers of God's word, in this our land.

Look upon Christendom, designated, geographically, by the fourth empire, in the prophecies of Daniel, ii. 40—43; vii. 7, 8. The ten toes of the image correspond with the ten horns of the beast, and both of them represent the ten states into which the Roman empire was broken.

Look upon Christendom, designated nationally by Israel and Judah. Israel representing the idolatrous, that is, the papal nations; and Judah representing the nation which protested against that idolatry, and clave to the pure spiritual worship of the only true God, that is Britain.

As Israel of old, because of the golden calves

and idolatrous altars which Jeroboam had set up, was severely scourged, in the righteous providence of God: so the papal nations of Christendom have been scourged, because of their idolatrous worship of a consecrated wafer, and of a deified virgin, and saints without number; and because of their anti-Christian allegiance to a priest upon a throne, arrogating to himself the attributes of the infallible sin-forgiving God, and usurping the authority of the Messiah over the nations. Intestine broils, treasons, and massacres, have marked their history; and they have every one been made the theatre of foreign invasion, and most bloody wars. God raised up Napoleon, the great anti-type, in this respect, of the Assyrian, to sweep across the length and breadth of them with the besom of national destruction, insomuch that it became proverbial of him, that crowns were his playthings, and that he moved kings as children do puppets.

Fearful, unspeakably fearful have the judgments of God been upon the papal nations. Their cities have been turned into barracks, their fruitful plains into encampments. Their houses have been plundered, their children torn

from their arms, their wives and daughters made a prey, before their eyes, to the ruthless infuriated soldiery. Their temples of worship have been rifled, and converted into commissariat storehouses. National calamities, to the uttermost, have been poured upon them.

During these fearful inflictions of divine justice upon the papal nations of Europe, behold, our modern Judah has been preserved in prosperity! Neither famine, nor pestilence, nor civil war, nor foreign invasion, have cast the beauty of England in the dust, since the day that she settled her national protest against the papacy. When one of her kings proved false to this protest, she ejected him from her throne, and from her soil, and crowned a protesting prince in his place. She prospered therefore, and her renown went forth among the nations for her beauty, because of the comeliness which the Lord God had put upon her. The great conqueror of the papal nations attempted to invade her, but he soon found that his commission did not extend to the nation which God protected. While he confined himself to the papal nations, against whom Jehovah raised him up, his sword was invulnerable; but when

he turned it against the shield of England, God's witness, he found it had no edge: and when, passing the boundaries of the ancient Roman empire, he attempted to carry it over land to the eastern possessions of England, (for that was the true secret of his Russian expedition,) God nipped it in the frost, and caused the broken fragments to fall back upon the owner. England was preserved for her protest's sake, and the great scourge of the papacy was given into her hands a captive.

Meanwhile she has been fast proving ungrateful for her blessings. She has been ascribing them to her wisdom, to her commerce, to her insular situation, to her mechanical improvements, and the consequent prodigious increase of her manufactures—to any thing rather than to her protest against popery. And as she has been gradually acquiring confidence in this opinion, that her national prosperity has been wholly independent of her protest and independent of her God; so now she seems to think that her prosperity will remain, yea and increase, after her protest has been withdrawn. The example of her sister nations in Europe seems to be thrown away upon her. The warnings of the holy scrip-

tures, and of her reformers, and of the few faithful witnesses who have been, and are set for the truth in her, seem to be utterly disregarded. She seems to be on the point of making common cause with the apostasy, and of course of incurring the final anger of her long-suffering God. The time seems to be drawing near, when she must drink of the cup of bitterness, which was so long in the hands of Spain and Portugal, and France and Italy, i. e. when she must endure national degradation.

Now then it is, that all the Jeremiahs in the land should speak out, unabashed by the infidel clamour of religion having nothing to do with politics. I call this an infidel clamour, because although it is not to be denied that a man may be a true and lively Christian without being a politician, yet to deny that God regards the established religion of nations, and to assert that he makes no national distinctions between those who worship him and those who worship him not, is to deny his overruling providence as well as his revealed word, and is therefore infidel. With all the confidence then of a man who believes that the living God, the God of Judah and the God of England, spake these words by

his servants the prophets, and designed them for the use of the ministers of his word throughout the times of the Gentiles, I transfer the language of Jeremiah, and use his imagery, as applicable at this day to this degenerate but as yet protesting nation.

My fellow-countrymen, read with me again the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Jeremiah. The sign of the girdle is a standing sign, and the application of it is, I repeat, most legitimately transferable from the twelve tribes to Christendom, from Judah to Britain. God caused all Christendom to cleave unto him at the first, to the exclusion of more populous and refined nations of the east. But omitting now any further mention of the papal nations who have already drunk at the Lord's hand out of the cup of his anger, we concentrate our attention upon Britain, whose ruin yet lingers in the long-suffering forbearance of her offended God. But she will not hear. It is too far gone. The wound is incurable. Her men of rank and influence are too deeply tainted with infidelity. Having only the grounds of political expediency and the abstract rights of man to argue upon, all the arguments are in favour of giving up our

protest against the papacy. The revealed purposes of God being no longer the avowed basis of our legislation, it appears of course profoundly absurd in the eyes of our enlightened legislators, to make any allusion to God as caring for England, or to maintain at any political inconvenience or risk, a protest which has for its object merely to secure the favour of God. To talk of God sending war or pestilence or famine upon an idolatrous nation, and perpetuating in the meantime peace and prosperity to a nation which protests against the idolatry, is now considered as the wild raving of a fanatical fever. While to ascribe all such things to chance, or to the wisdom, prudence, foresight and diligence of men, is considered sober, and rational, and sensible.

“ Therefore thus saith the Lord God of England, Every bottle shall be filled with wine; and if they sneeringly reply as Judah did of old, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine? Then thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon the protesting throne, whose only right to that throne is grounded upon that protest, and the priests,

and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Britain, with drunkenness." I will infatuate them, that they shall become as stupid and insensible to what concerns their national interest, as a drunken man is towards his personal concerns. Reasoning, threatening, promising, all shall be thrown away upon them, they shall glory in their shame, and sing "*rule Britannia*" in their drunken pride, while they have shorn the locks of Britannia's strength, and paralysed the arm of Britannia's rule. "And I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord." I will break up the bonds and ties of society even into the recesses of domestic life, so that paternal affection will no longer influence, filial confidence no longer restrain. My ultimate authority as head and father of all being denied or rejected, all the ancient bulwarks which rested upon the foundation of that final appeal to me, shall give way, and spread desolating ruin around. "I will not spare, nor pity, nor have mercy, but will destroy them." Is the Bible to be treated as some men treat history, like an old useless almanack? Who is there so ripe for destruction, so ready to rush upon the thick bosses of the

Almighty's buckler, as to answer, Yes? And if not, but if the Bible contain the voice of the living God addressed unto this day to living men, then who can deny the legitimacy of this application, and most fearful prediction?

The accomplishment of it is begun already. Appalling proofs speed with every post through the land. Hear, ye men of Britain, be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken. He who has instantaneous and irresistible power of life and death, of heaven or hell over you all, he hath spoken. Dare not therefore to turn with a sneer and say, Poh, poh, we have preaching enough without this. Will you verify the description of the men of Judah in this prophecy, and *refuse to hear the word of the Lord?* Alas! it is already too fatally verified. The man who dares to speak the word of the Lord among you, receives no fair play. If a man speak his own fancies, his own political sagacity, or quote from the sagacious sayings of human politicians of past ages, he meets with due indulgence for his inexperience, his nervousness, his good intentions: but if a man speak as an ambassador from Christ the King of kings, and quote from the records of God's eternal truth, he is made an offender

for a word ; some human frailty, wholly independent of the subject in hand, is laid hold of as a handle to turn *the man* into ridicule, when his *arguments* cannot be answered. No, you will not hear ; but you shall hear, and God will make both your ears tingle, when it shall be too late to repent.

If such a man as Jeremiah were now in London, and placed, in the providence of God, in such a sphere as that his words could reach the court, and by that means the whole nation—what would be said to him ? what would be done with him ? His friends, or they who seemed to be his friends, would say, ‘ Why do you speak so ? are you mad ? You will give mortal offence, you will ruin your prospects in life, you will never get promotion.’ Imbued with the spirit that rebuked Simon Magus, such a man would reply, Your prospects and your promotion perish with you, because you have thought that the truth of God should be smothered for the sake of promotion among men. His enemies would soon contrive, as Jeremiah’s did, to silence him by the arm of power. No, you will not hear, but you shall hear, and God will make both your ears tingle, when it is too late to repent.

As yet he expostulates, and thus he saith to you by the Holy Ghost in the prophet: "Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains." "The fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given him to scorch men with fire, and men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to *give glory to God*. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was filled with *darkness*." These vials have been poured upon the papal nations. Britain repent, and give glory to God, before he bring darkness upon you also; and *while ye look for light*, he turn it into the shadows of death. All that leads from God, or pretends to do without God, how bright soever it may seem in the eyes of men, must end in the blackness of darkness. The temple in which the goddess of human reason is worshipped, is the wide door and the broad road of intellectual idolatry by which the multitudes of educated Britain are hasting into hell. The cry of civil and religious liberty, as it is now raised in Britain, is the

disguised watchword of the wildest and most wanton democracy that ever prostrated the distinctions of order in a great nation.

No, you will not hear! Well, I will not threaten; I will not triumph over your deplorable infatuation; I will not forget who hath made me to differ, preserving me by his free grace from the contamination of this conciliating, compromising, liberal, infidel opiate, which is lulling you to sleep; no, I will earnestly pray unto my God, to give me so much of the spirit that animated my beloved Master when he wept over the devoted city, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! but now, they are hid from thine eyes! as will cause my soul to weep in secret places for your pride. I will not indeed pharisaically publish a doleful whine about the matter, neutralizing this appeal; but in secret places my soul shall pour forth its complainings and its petitions before God for my beloved country, and mine eye shall weep sore and run down with tears, because my king, for whom I could willingly die in defence of the protest which seated him upon the throne, has consented to withdraw that protest. May I not

affectionately address him? and will not my honest affection (for I love him) excuse my faithful freedom, while I adopt the language of Jeremiah, and say, "Humble thyself before the Lord thy God for this," remembering whose minister thou art, "for your principalities shall come down, even the throne of your glory." Your royal city shall be desolate (where is Babylon? where is Tyre? where is Athens? where is Imperial Rome?) Lift up your eyes, and behold the coming storm. Your protest against the papacy in the name of your God, maintained at the expense of much apparent political inconvenience and risk, has sheltered your people, and they have stood without a parallel in Europe. But now! thus saith the Lord of Hosts, "where is the flock that *was given thee*, thy beautiful flock?" I cannot bring myself to continue the application of this context—Oh! my revered, my much-loved Sovereign, this letter can never reach you; and if it did, it could not convey any adequate idea either of my ardent affection for your royal person, or my poignant grief at the disastrous intelligence of the last week. None of the liberals can love your Majesty upon the high and holy principle that I do: for they deny

that you are Christ's vicegerent over this realm, the hand, the voice, the minister of God to us for good. Oh! our King, stand fast, put your trust in God, he has been a father to England, refuse to sign away the protest, which has done better service to your people in all their danger, than fleets and armies could ever do.

In vain, in vain! It is too late. The nation is sunk. The high ground on which our protest should be maintained; the only ground on which it is a righteous thing to maintain it, has not been defended, has not been occupied. No, not by the avowed advocates of what I plead for. If lands and tythes be the best ground our protest has to stand on, down with it, the sooner the better, it should never have been set up. But if these things be merely accessories in the superstructure, and the foundation be God's holy word proclaiming ruin upon the beast and all who receive the mark of the beast, then hold to it, as you value the political existence of your country.

Yes, it is too late, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may this people do good, who are accustomed to do evil." Unrighteousness is part and parcel of the whole

framework of society. To look for integrity of principle is the height of romance. Covetousness is the mainspring of the movement, from the senator down to the day-labourer. Witness the coalition between all-tolerating infidelity and the intolerant papacy: each endeavouring to serve itself of the other. Words smooth as butter are passing between them, while daggers are in their hearts. Witness the advantage which the landlord takes of the farmer, which the farmer takes of the parish rates, which the millers and shopkeepers in our smallest villages take of the necessities of the poor, allowing them to continue under an arrear of debt, giving them inferior articles at the full price, and if they presume to murmur, pouncing upon them for the whole amount due. The system cannot be washed clean, it must be broken.

But how? I pretend not to predict how, but as a specimen of what *may* be, I refer to the description of the dearth in Judah; and I ask, can the wisdom of our senators command the clouds to give their fertilizing showers upon the earth, or to withhold their over-abundant milder-dewing rains? They may, as Mr. Canning did, take an average of several seasons back, and thence guess at the coming one; but the

provisions of their corn-bills must hang suspended upon events, which are in the hand of our God alone. Suppose a dearth, suppose a panic, suppose a national bankruptcy—God is at no loss for instruments. The tenure upon which our foreign relations still hold an aspect of peace, is frail as the breath of falsehood. Only let England enter into covenant, and make common cause with the apostacy, and her doom is sealed. Her righteous protest so long kept up, and all her glory erected thereupon, shall not be mentioned: in her trespass that she hath trespassed, and in her sin that she hath sinned, in them shall she die. “The portion of thy measure from me, O Britain, is full, saith the Lord, because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood. Therefore, thy riches and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners and thy pilots, thy calkers and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war that are in thee, and in all thy company which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin. I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations! Woe unto thee, O Britain! wilt thou not be made clean!—when shall it once be?”

Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold the teachers of this people lead them astray. They say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine, nor panic, nor bankruptcy, but ye shall have assured peace in this land. Thus do they prophesy unto them smooth things, and the people love to have it so. Then said the Lord unto me, They prophesy lies : I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them. They prophesy a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own heart.

Is it not so, my fellow-countrymen? Your national teachers have deceived you. Many of them are utterly careless upon the subject : if they can *get through* the prescribed form of duties, a neglect of which would incur human censure, they are satisfied ; and it never costs them a thought, whether you are instructed in the ways of God or not, whether you are saved or damned. These are the “ blind watchmen, dumb dogs, that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber, they cannot understand. They all look to their own way, (engaged in personal concerns, as private gentlemen,) every one for his gain from his quarter.”

Some of these, fearing apparently for their gains, have sounded the trumpet of conciliation towards their popish *brethren*, and have told you, that the difference between Protestantism and Popery is only *believing a little more, or believing a little less*; a saying which, if proved to be true, signs the death-warrant of their legitimacy as a Protestant establishment. These men have neglected you: you have no confidence in them, and when any of them attempt to influence you, they fail. But the teachers who have led you astray are men of a different stamp, men of activity, of zeal, of much profession: men who have talked about Christian experience, humility, and piety, and brotherly love, till they have gained an ascendancy over your affections. These are the men who prophecy unto you smooth things, telling you of the great increase of vital religion, and the general improvement amongst all classes of society. They see not the revealed end of the great purpose of God in creation: neither do they recognise the revealed plan of God in allowing Satan to usurp the principality of this world, which was lost in the first man, Adam, and shall be restored in the second Adam,

Jesus Christ, at his coming again. They see not the various forms which the Satanic usurpation has assumed, from Babel down to Rome, whose revealed name is still Babel, or Babylon, the city of confusion. They see not that Jehovah (to prove his sovereignty all the while, and make it manifest that Satan was not the real master, but had bounds set to him, which he could not pass over,) reserved to himself, in every age, a people against whom the great usurpation never fully succeeded : and that the smaller and more apparently insignificant this reservation was in itself, the more clearly it manifested the special interference of Him, who could keep one rose blooming, in the midst of a wild howling wilderness, a lovely token of what He can make the whole, an earnest, though a faint one, of what the whole shall be made, when the fulness of the appointed time shall come. They cannot show you, because they see not, or will not see themselves, that England, *as a nation*, is a theme of divine prophecy ; that the fourth section of the image in the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, and the fourth beast in the vision of Daniel, and the ten horned beast in the visions of St. John, all represent the Roman empire, and in it England

as a part and parcel of it; in it also popery, as the little horn, boasting great things against the Most High, and wearing out his saints. They declare not, that the image must be broken in pieces as a potter's vessel, that the beast must be cast into the burning flame of Jehovah's wrath; and that if England escape, it can only be under the shield of her national protest against both the tyranny of the image, and the abominations of the beast.

No; they spend all the strength of their teachings upon what is personal in your religion, and even in that field they make more of what they think shall bring benefit to you, than of what shall bring glory to your God. Here again they fail: their appeals are superficial; tending to momentary excitement, and evaporating without solid edification. They address you from the first month till the twelfth, as sinners or as believers, and allow the year to expire, without addressing you as subjects of the King of England, or members of the Church of England. They speak of God always as the God of individuals, and seem to have no faculty to perceive Him as the God of nations. These, my fellow-countrymen, are the teachers who have beguiled you into a tame acquiescence

with compromising liberalism ; into a narrow selfishness of personal spirituality, which makes you look down upon any national view of religion as unholy and unclean ; which makes you consider England, or Englishmen, expressions suitable for an act of parliament, but not to be endured in the pulpit ; which has brought the pious among you into such a state of mind, as had it existed in the men of Judah, must have pronounced Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Daniel, to be carnal politicians.

And your dissenting teachers ! Many of them have openly denied the God that bought you. They blasphemously teach that Jesus Christ is not God, while, with glaring inconsistency they admit that he was a good man ; whereas if he be not God, he is convicted out of his own mouth to have been a liar, and an impostor of the deepest dye.

Others, who maintain in the letter much of orthodox doctrine, fall under the very same reproof which I have just uttered against a large class of your national teachers. In this perpetual anatomy of the heart of an individual sinner, they have wholly lost sight of the Lord God of the nations. They refuse even to examine, and they never attempt to expound to

you the national prophecies of God's holy word: yet they zealously circulate that word, and put those prophecies into your hands. Of course they cannot value rightly England's protest against the apostasy; and those among them, who are still opposed to popery, oppose it *solely* on the ground of false doctrine to the individual. Therefore it is, that although they are opposed to Socinianism on the same individual grounds; yet, in their corporate capacity, as Englishmen, they have made common cause with that deadly heresy. O, Independents, shame! Wesleyans, Baptists—shame! O shame! What! separate so completely between your God, and your political privileges, as to join in seeking them, with the avowed enemies of Him. Woe unto them that go down to Egypt for help; that stay on the horses, and trust in the chariots of the enemies of the Lord. Woe unto them that do evil, that good may come.

Fellow countrymen, I know full well that the charge here preferred against the bulk of your teachers, that they prophesy falsely, is easily retorted, and will be retorted. Who is to decide between us? Read the twenty-third chapter of Jeremiah with me, and you will find

the characteristics by which I am willing to stand or fall. The false prophets prophesy *peace* to Judah and Jerusalem; the true prophets prophesy judgments and impending ruin. "Thus, saith the Lord of Hosts, hearken not unto the words of the (false) prophets that prophesy unto you: **THEY MAKE YOU VAIN**: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, **YE SHALL HAVE PEACE**; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, **NO EVIL SHALL COME UPON YOU**. For who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord?" Mark their unbelief, denying that the Lord has really revealed his mind to any one! This is the true secret of an indisposition to search the prophecies. For who, say they, can tell what the Almighty intends to do? "Who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard his word? Who hath marked his word, and heard it?" Yet though denying this, they themselves speak of what is coming, saying, *ye shall have peace*. But what saith the true prophet? "Behold a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously

upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have executed and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: *in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly.*" Thus saith the Lord, "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own hearts, which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams, which they tell every man to his neighbour. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream, and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?" It is the chaff, it is the dream that saith, Peace, peace, where there is no peace, proclaiming tranquillity to the empire, from the *manly* and *honourable* decision of practical infidelity.

Fellow-countrymen, beware! The fault of your teachers will not exculpate yourselves. "If the blind lead the blind," not the leaders only, but "both shall fall into the ditch." "For thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in

this land: By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed. *And the people to whom they prophesy* shall be cast out in the streets, because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them."

Fellow-countrymen, I have seen the sword coming, I have raised my voice, I have given my warning, I have delivered my own soul. And now should your teachers say "Come and let us devise devices against Jeremiah: for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet." We are the wise, who is he, that he should charge us with not telling the truth? "Come and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words." Should this be so, and should you join with those teachers, proudly refusing to examine the divine records in their transferable application, and hardening yourselves to despise the warnings of the word of the Lord—then, O my God, give ear to me and hear me, and strengthen me to return good for evil. I am become an enemy to my people because I tell them the truth. Yet, holy Father, let me pray for them in secret

with fervent affection, and warn them in public with persevering faithfulness : if yet thy uplifted hand may be stayed in prolonged forbearance. But if not : if it may not be : if they will not hear, but provoke and defy Thee still—then, O my God, at the last, when the word shall pass thy lips in righteousness, sustain my trembling flesh, and give me strength above nature to rejoice in thy holy vengeance. Jer. xx. 11—13.

Fellow-countrymen, farewell ! Who I am signifies nothing. What I have said, is of overwhelming consequence. You have just been told by the Duke of Wellington, that England has no cause for fear. It may be so from the hand of man : but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear. Fear God ; and read his sure word of prophecy against the papacy, and all who unite with her. Honour your king, and strengthen his hands to maintain inviolate your national protest, your impenetrable shield.

Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, thus saith the Lord of Hosts : Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house, (the house of God, the established church,) as the high places of a forest

Hezekiah, king of Judah, and all Judah took warning: they feared the Lord, and besought the Lord, and the Lord repented of the evil which he had pronounced against them: and he postponed the execution of it till the reign of Zedekiah.

Jonah, also, the son of Amittai, prophesied against Nineveh, and said, Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed. Then the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh, by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger that we perish not." Here again the everlasting God, who in wrath remembers mercy, with-

drew his hand and suspended the national judgment.

My fellow-countrymen, do you believe the Bible to be the word of God? Do you indeed believe it? Shall the men of Nineveh rise up in the judgment with you, and condemn you? Your protest is your shield. Oh, that you were wise, that you understood this! How should one of you chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight? Neither Papist at home, nor Russian, French, or Turk abroad, nor all combined, could hurt you. But break your protest, and a feather shall upset you! Some son or daughter of Belial shall receive a commission from your righteous God to lay a trap for you; and you shall be snared, and taken, and broken. Behold, I have told you, before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye may believe.

February, 1829.

LONDON:

EBOTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

2.
POPERY THEOLOGICAL.

St 1829

ANOTHER CHALLENGE!

REPLY

OF

THE REV. HUGH M^cNEILE,

Rector of Albury, Surrey,

TO

THE REV. JOSEPH SIDDEN,

Roman Catholic Priest, Sutton Park, Surrey.



LONDON:

J. HATCHARD & SON, 187, PICCADILLY.

1829.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY T. BRETTELL, RUPERT STREET, HAYMARKET.

REPLY, &c.

Albury Rectory, April 30, 1829.

REV. SIR,

I HAVE just received a printed copy of our Correspondence*, accompanied by an introductory notice from you, assigning your reasons for the publication, and also for the addition of what you call a useful Appendix.

You have refused to enter into a discussion with me in person, and have had recourse to the press: I do not refuse to follow you thither; anxious, as I am, by every means in my power, to call the attention of men to the fundamental, and consequently irreconcilable opposition, between the truths of Almighty God, revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and the tenets of the Roman Church, maintained in the Decrees of her Councils, the Bulls of her Popes, the Catechisms of her Bishops, and the Sermons of her Controversialists.

Before I proceed to examine your Appendix,

* The Correspondence is reprinted at the end of this Letter.

allow me to observe upon your introductory notice: first, in reply to your reason for printing our Correspondence. "The Rector of Albury," you say, "having already commented on one of Mr. Sidden's Letters at a public meeting." You will learn, I hope, that your information is not always to be relied upon, when I tell you, that I have not been present at any public meeting since our Correspondence commenced. And, secondly, in reply to your reason for adding an Appendix, "to compensate for the defects of hastily written-letters." I of course concluded from this notice that the Correspondence was published *verbatim* from the original letters; but, on examination, I confess I was surprised to find that your letters have been *carefully corrected*, differing from the originals not in diction only, but in substance also. There are a few mistakes made in the printing of my letters; but I am willing to believe that these were unintentional errors of the press,

I. Your Appendix consists of eight numbers. The first is an extract from BOSSUET's *Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of Rome*. The subject is the merit of good works, and the first paragraph is as follows:—"Upon the merits of our works the Romish Church teaches, that to those who do good even to the end, and who place their hope in God, eternal life should be proposed, both as a grace mercifully promised through Jesus Christ to be given

to the children of God, and as a reward to be faithfully bestowed upon their own good works and merits, in virtue of the promise of God himself." (*Conc. Trid.*, sess. xi., c. 16.) Here eternal life is declared to be *both a grace* from God, *and also a reward* of man's works and merits. The apostle Paul, or rather the Holy Ghost by the Apostle, has written, that salvation is of grace, not of works, and if by grace then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. (*Eph.* ii. 8, 9; *Rom.* xi. 6.)

Here, then, we have the doctrine of the Romish Church, as quoted by you, with approbation from Bossuet, in the very words of the Council of Trent, directly at issue with the language of inspiration. Eternal life is a grace, and also a reward of works, says the Romish Church. If it be of grace then it is no more of works, says the Apostle. Eternal life is a reward of works, and also a grace, says the Romish Church. If it be of works, then it is no more of grace, says the Apostle. Sir, I agree with the Apostle, and therefore I protest against the Romish Church. The Romish Church embodies, as her avowed doctrine, the mystery of iniquity which has its seat in every man's heart by nature, and endeavours to dovetail it upon the Gospel of Christ. The Apostle protested against this iniquity, and severed it from the Gospel of Christ, by a chasm which no ingenuity can evade. The controversialists

of the Church of Rome have of late years (at least in this country) exerted themselves to the utmost to dilute the more offensive statements of their councils down to an approximation with what passes current for true doctrine amongst nominal Protestants. They have succeeded too well. Mingling their trimming statements of doctrine with plausible proposals of union and brotherhood, they have deceived the ignorant and unwary. On the subject now before us, this has been done by artfully mixing up justification and sanctification, and confounding character with merit. Those, however, who are acquainted with, and impressed by, the everlasting boundaries of truth and error, as laid down by the apostle, cannot be so deluded: they have not so learned Christ, neither can they tolerate, for a moment, the idea of adding any merit to his merit. If the Council of Trent contained nothing worse, or nothing more, upon the subject of human merit, than the passage above cited; yet on this ground alone, consistency would demand of you either to abjure the apostle Paul, or to separate from the Church of Rome. I here identify the Church of Rome with the Council of Trent, and in your case at least I am right in so doing; because, by the Bull of Pius IV. you, as a priest of that Church, have been required to make a public profession that you embrace and receive each and all of the things which are declared by the Council of Trent concerning justification, and to ratify the same by a solemn oath. The words concluding the pro-

fession, after anathematizing all things contrary to the Decrees of Trent, are as follow :—" Hanc veram Catholicam fidem, EXTRA QUAM NEMO SALVUS ESSE POTEST, quam in præsentī sponte profiteor et veraciter teneo, eamdem integram et immaculatam, usque ad extremum vitæ spiritum constantissime (Deo adjuvante) retinere et confiteri ; ATQUE A MEIS SUBDITIS, VEL ILLIS QUORUM CURA AD ME IN MUNERE MEO SPECTABIT, TENERI, DOCERI, ET PRÆDICARI, QUANTUM IN ME ERIT, CURATURUM, EGO IDEM N. SPONDEO, VOVEO, AC JURO : Sic me Deus adjuvet et hæc sancta Dei Evangelia." P. 391, *Tridentini Canones et Decreta*, 1774.

That our readers may judge for themselves concerning some of the articles to which you have thus sworn, I transcribe a few of those Canons in which the Council of Trent pronounces an anathema upon what it decrees to be false doctrine. The ninth Canon is as follows :—" If any one shall say that the wicked man is justified by faith alone, by which is meant, that to obtain the grace of justification there needs no other thing to co-operate with it, and that it is not so much as necessary that he should prepare and dispose himself by the motions of his will, let him be accursed." The apostle Paul says, *a man is justified by faith only, God justifies the ungodly ; we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus : now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt ; but to him that WORKETH NOT, but believeth*

on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness: even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God IMPUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. If any man say so, says the Council, let him be accursed. Paul says so; therefore, according to the Council (and you have sworn the Council is right) Paul is accursed.

Again, the eleventh Canon is, “If any one shall say that men are justified, either by the alone imputation of Christ’s righteousness, or only by the remission of sins, excluding grace and charity, which is diffused in our hearts by the Holy Ghost and inheres in them—or that the grace by which we are justified *is only the favour of God*, let him be accursed.” The apostle Paul says, *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one who believeth: by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous: God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.* If any man say either of these things, says the Council, let him be accursed. Paul says them both; therefore according to the Council (and you have sworn the Council to be right) Paul is accursed.

Again, the thirty-second Canon is—"If any one shall say that the good works of a justified man are so the gifts of God that they are not also *the merits* of the same justified person; or that he, being justified by the good works which are performed by him through the grace of God and merits of Jesus Christ, whose living member he is, does not truly *merit* increase of grace and eternal life, and the attainment of that eternal life if he shall depart in grace, and even the increase of glory, let him be accursed." Here the works of a Christian man are pronounced to be profitable towards meriting increase of grace and the attainment of eternal life, and even increase of glory; and any man who says they are not so, is pronounced to be accursed. Jesus Christ our Lord said to his disciples, *when ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.* Does he tell them that when they had done good works, they *merited* increase of grace, or were profitable towards the attainment of eternal life and increase of glory? Nay, verily, he says, when ye have done all, ye are unprofitable servants. According to the Council of Trent therefore (and you have sworn the council to be right) Jesus Christ our Lord is accursed. I am persuaded, Sir, that you are shocked by this conclusion: but look again and again at the premises, and see whether you can fairly escape this conclusion in any other way than by renouncing the Council of Trent,

and thereby protesting against the Church of Rome. Remember, it is written in the book of God, that *no man speaking by the Holy Ghost calleth Jesus accursed*. Be persuaded, therefore, that the Holy Ghost could not have presided at the Council of Trent. Pay more regard, I conjure you, to the revealed truth of God and the salvation of your own soul, than to the traditions of men and the prejudices of education, and appeal for the support of those doctrines on which you stake your eternity, to Jesus Christ and his apostles, not to the Bishop of Meaux, or the Doctors of Trent.

The remainder of this number in your Appendix, contains a clever specimen of Bossuet's insidious mixture of the doctrine of man's helplessness with the doctrine of justification, in order that he might on this point attack "calvinist ministers for starting questions of mere subtilty," and thereby seem to gain for his side of the controversy on another point, all Protestants who are not Calvinists. There is a great difference between a cavilling controversialist wilfully darkening argument by a dexterous infusion of extraneous matter, and an honest theologian who feels his responsibility as an interpreter of God's word, and grapples with real difficulties. This slimy method, however, is quite as *judicious* now for the attainment of a special purpose among men, as it was in the days of Bossuet; and as it has lost nothing in expediency during a century and a half, so neither has it gained any thing in honesty.

Perhaps, Sir, you have not perceived this disingenuous dexterity, and have been really deceived by the eloquence of your great controversialist. If so, I shall truly rejoice in this providential opportunity afforded me, of apprizing an honest man of the evil company into which he has undesignedly fallen. An extract from a more undisguised champion of Romish theology may tend to complete your conviction. I quote from a work entitled, "A Christian Doctrine, wherein the principles of the Roman Catholic religion are briefly explained; an improved edition, sanctioned by the Right Reverend Doctor Tuohy." How is the penalty of sins remitted? *By means of satisfactory works.* What do you mean by doing an action well? *I mean the doing of it so, or in such a manner, as God may have no cause to find fault with it.* Are good actions of any benefit to a Christian besides making him virtuous? *Yes, for moreover, every good action is meritorious, impetratory, and satisfactory.* What do you mean by a good action being meritorious? *I mean it deserves to be rewarded by God.* What do you mean by its being impetratory? *I mean that it claims and solicits God's grace, and a continuance and increase of it.* What do you mean by its being satisfactory? *I mean that it is capable of atoning for the punishment due to sin.* Doctor James Butler, also, in a Catechism, "revised, enlarged, approved, and recommended by the four Roman Catholic Archbishops of Ireland," asks, what do you mean by the penance enjoined by the con-

fessor? and teaches his pupils to answer:—*The prayers and other good works which he enjoins on penitents in satisfaction for their sins.* Will the penance enjoined in confession always satisfy for our sins? *No; but whatever else is wanting may be supplied by indulgences, and our own penitential endeavours.* Finally, Doctor Peter Augustin Baines, in a sermon which you have taken some pains to circulate, says:—"My brethren of various persuasions, let me ask what *conditions* do *you* require for the sinner's forgiveness? If he is truly sorry for his sins: if he is resolved to commit them no more: if he is determined to begin a new life, do you not believe, that under such circumstances, God forgives him his sins? So far, then, you agree with the Catholic (*i. e.* Romish) Church in the conditions for divine forgiveness." This, addressed to Protestants, is either ignorantly or fraudulently false in Doctor Baines. We agree with no church which prescribes any conditions whatever to be performed by the sinner for the attainment of divine forgiveness. We believe that God *justifies the ungodly*, freely, in, and by, Jesus Christ. We maintain, that we are accounted righteous before God only for the merits of Christ, by faith, and not for our own works and deservings: and also, that all works done by men previous to their justification in Christ, are not good works, but have the nature of sin.* Doctor Baines, however, is not content with this. He pro-

* Articles xi. and xiii. of the Church of England.

ceeds thus :—" But these conditions, though all that most of you require, are not all that are required by the Catholic (*i. e.* Romish) Church. * * * * * The sinner must, moreover, submit to MAKE SUCH ATONEMENT TO HIS OFFENDED GOD by prayer, by fasting, by works of self-denial, and the like, as may be required of him, &c." Here is direct rebellion against the all-sufficiency of Jesus crucified ! This is what establishes an eternal separation between the religion of Rome and the religion of the Bible. Doctor Baines complains, with much pathos, of the hideous portraits which have been drawn of his religion by its adversaries. It would be difficult to discover in all the annals of controversy a more hideous portrait than he has himself succeeded in exhibiting in a few words.

I shall now conclude this topic for the present, but shall be happy to recur to it, after you have explained upon what principle you profess allegiance both to the New Testament and the Council of Trent.

II.—Your Second Number appears to be original. It is entitled " A Compendious Statement of the Civil and Religious Principles of Roman Catholics ;" but consisting of mere assertion upon your own authority without any attempt at proof, it requires but little notice or reply from me. I cannot, however, refrain from expressing my surprise, that in your Compendious Statement there should be no mention of, or even allusion to, the Virgin Mary. Your

brethren will not be much obliged to you for so defective a summary of Romish doctrine. Perhaps you will say she is included, or at least her picture, in the following passage :—" Catholics (*i. e.* members of the Church of Rome) renounce all divine worship and adoration of images or pictures. It is God alone we worship and adore ; nevertheless we place *pictures* in our churches to recall our wandering thoughts, and *enliven* our memories towards heavenly things." The ancient heathen renounced all divine worship and adoration of images or pictures. It was Jupiter and Juno, and Apollo and Diana, that they worshipped and adored ; nevertheless they placed statues in their temples, to recall their wandering thoughts, and enliven their memories towards heavenly things. The Jews in the wilderness renounced all divine worship and adoration of images. It was God alone who brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, whom they worshipped and adored ; nevertheless, they set up a golden calf to recall their wandering thought and enliven their memories towards their deliverance ; and while they danced before the calf, they sang the praises of Jehovah. I have no idea of Romanists, however devoted to the Council of Trent, however sincere in repeating the litanies of Loretto and St. Francis, and however ignorant of the holy Scriptures, being greater idolaters than the ancient heathen, or the generation of Jews who sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play in the wilderness. I do not think they are ; for idolatry is idolatry ; and

whether the object for enlivening the memory be a beautifully finished marble statue, *factus ad unguem* by a Phidias; or a calf of gold rudely cast in a mould by Aaron; or an ivory image upon a cross; or a wax figure dressed in silks of divers colours, with a wax baby in her arms, the sin is the same. Except indeed that the clearer the light that is abused by men, the deeper and deadlier is the condemnation of those who abuse it.

To remedy your deficiency respecting the Virgin, I here present our readers with an extract from a sermon preached in her honour by an eloquent priest, who was not aware of any Protestants being in his congregation:—

“ This church, resplendent with more than terrestrial glory, and resounding with instruments which echo the voice of angels, represents the palace of the High God. Behold your Queen, diffusing from her divine countenance, grace, beauty, love, majesty, and gentleness. What hinders, that in the fulness of your faith, and the ardour of your love, calling to mind the memorable day, when entering into the territory of our Lord, she assumed the undivided power of God: what hinders, that united with the myriads of saints, of angels, and blessed spirits, you should join your voices to the grand chorus, and receive her this day as your Queen and Lady, that her mild and gracious empire may be extended to you, and that you may feel the warmth of those

benign rays, which issued from her on the day of her elevation to the throne of heaven ?

“ You think, perhaps, that seated as she is in heaven, Sovereign of the universe, by crowning her with this new crown, we do not extend her kingdom, that we do not increase her glory, her magnificence, and honour. * * * * But in the same way as the Divine Redeemer, in the midst of so much glory and splendour, extends his empire by the numbers of those who turn to him in humble obedience ; so also the Divine Mother extends her empire by all the new worshippers that surround her image, and unite to celebrate her graces. * * * *

“ The throne of the Son, according to the words of St. Chrysostom, is the throne of mercy and truth ; but of justice too and rigour, and that from which the evangelist saw issue thunder, lightning, and thunderbolts. But there was another throne raised in heaven, spreading around it mercy and kindness. Here all find a secure asylum ; to this may come all the most vile and most unworthy, all who dare not approach the throne of the Son of God. Here supplicants abound, and grace much more abounds. And oh ! may glory, benediction, and praise, rest upon this throne, and her who sits thereon ! To her immortal memory may there be raised temples, statues, triumphal arches, and pyramids ; and while the sound of Lady and Queen resounds from the mouths of angels, let Lady and Queen re-echo from

the earth. From the North Pole to the Ethiopian desert, under every clime, in every nation, however varied in language, rites, and customs, let the sound be spread, let her name be glorified." * * * *

III. Your third number is an "Extract from Gother's Papist", represented and misrepresented." This is a list of disclaimers of obnoxious doctrines artfully worded in reference to the *motives* of the parties, so as to escape exposure in the letter. Take the following specimen:—"Cursed is he who contemns the Word of God, or who hides it from the people, *in order to keep* them from the knowledge of their duty, and to preserve them in ignorance and error." That the Church of Rome hides the Word of God from the people, is a fact which can be proved by most legitimate arguments; yet even so, Romanists may say Amen to this anathema, because the *motive* of their Church in hiding the Word of God from the people cannot be so distinctly proved as the fact itself; and they have this evasion left, therefore, that although the Word of God be wisely restricted from general circulation among the illiterate, it is not *in order to keep* them from a know-

* I am glad to perceive that one of your favourite authors has not the same antipathy to the word Papist, that you seem to feel so sensibly. Why object to the expression Popery in my letter? Are you so ashamed of your relationship to his Holiness (*il Papa*), as to renounce the family patronimic with all its derivatives?

ledge of their duty. It is of importance, however, that this fact be established—that the free circulation of the Bible is opposed by the Church of Rome; because, “if the Bible be against any set of men, those men are very apt to be against the Bible,” and *vice versâ*. This is, indeed, of primary importance, I shall therefore dwell upon it a little. Permit me, Sir, to engage you in this preliminary inquiry. What kind, and what degree of evidence would be sufficient to establish this fact? Would the decrees of ancient councils be sufficient? No, answers the Romanist: in matters of faith, indeed, the decrees of the œcumenical councils are infallible and unalterable. There, Romanism is *semper eadem**: but in matters of discipline and regulation, we are at liberty to avail ourselves of the growing light of Christian communities; and it is unfair and ungenerous to charge us with all those regulations, which, however wise and necessary at the time of their enactment, have now ceased to be binding upon us†. Evidence on this point, therefore, drawn from the decrees of councils, will not decide the question.

Would the testimony of modern Romanist writers of celebrity be sufficient? No, answers the Romanist

* “The religious opinions of Roman Catholics being unchangeable, are applicable to all times.”—*Dr. Troy, Pastoral Letter, Dublin, 1793.*

† Mr. Charles Butler complains of Mr. Southey, for “estimating the writings or actions of our ancestors in the dark ages, by the notions and manners of the present age.”—*Book of the Roman Catholic Church.*

again, because they are mere individual assertions of opinion, in no wise binding upon the whole body*. What then would be satisfactory evidence in this case? The decrees of councils, though general, are too old: and the opinions of celebrated writers of our own times, though modern enough, are of too individual a character to justify a charge against the general system. Would instances of the fact, whether ancient or modern, or both, be sufficient? No, once more answers the Romanist, because such instances, even if true, may be the exceptions, rather than the rule; and, of course, a general charge founded upon them would in that case be erroneous.

Observe then, Sir, the ground on which the Romish disputant stands for his defence against our charge. Though it should be shown, that ancient popish councils decreed restrictions on the reading of the Scriptures by the people, under pain of an anathema: and though it should be shown, that modern popish writers of great celebrity justify and defend such restrictions; and though it should be further shown, that historical facts, both in ancient and modern times, exhibit the practical operations of these restrictions among papists; yet still it remains to be proved, that Popery lays restrictions upon the reading of the Scriptures. Why, how can any thing be proved? Suppose an action were brought in one of our Courts

* This is another of Mr. Butler's complaints against Mr. Southey, "that he imputes to the general body, what is only chargeable on individuals."—*Book of the Roman Catholic Church*.

of Justice against a Joint Stock Company; and suppose the indictment to set forth a charge against the Directors, of a conspiracy to defraud the Shareholders, by keeping back a part of their lawful dues. The Directors plead not guilty, and the Plaintiff is put upon his proofs. He calls in evidence, first, a document signed by the original Directors, in which they enter into a compact that the Shareholders shall have only a part of their just dues, and reserve to themselves a right of disposing of the remainder. This document is authenticated beyond the possibility of denial. In answer to this document, the present Directors argue, that it is not signed by them—that the only original documents by which they are bound, are those which incorporated the Company, and remain unchanged; but that other and more private regulations are not binding upon them—that such regulations may have been wise and necessary at the time their predecessors signed the paper; but they are of opinion, that the agreement so signed should not now be acted upon; and it would, therefore, be manifestly unjust to charge them, now that they have more light, with what had been done by their predecessors while they were comparatively in the dark upon the subject of such regulations in detail. The plaintiff then produces a paper, signed by one of the present Directors, agreeing in sentiment with the old paper, though somewhat differently and more cautiously worded. In answer to this, the Directors say, that it is merely an individual opinion,

not implicating them as the managers of the Company, and certainly no fair ground for a verdict against them in their official capacity. The Plaintiff farther produces a number of instances in which the practice of accredited members of the direction had been precisely what it would have been, had the papers already submitted to the Court contained the true sentiments of the Directors. These facts, taken in connection with the papers, make an impression on the jury. The Directors, however, reply, that these facts are exceptions to their general conduct, and cannot fairly be received as the basis of a general rule against them. Suppose, then, that the Judge, in summing up the evidence, were to direct the attention of the jury to these two points; 1. That although the Directors admitted, that one of their present body had written the paper produced in evidence, yet they had quietly continued him as one of their body, instead of calling a general meeting of the Shareholders, to expose his conduct, and depose him from his office: and, 2. That the plea of the Directors against the facts stated in evidence, to wit, that they were the exceptions to the general rule of their proceedings, did in truth admit their occurrence:—what man in his senses can doubt for a moment the verdict of any intelligent jury!

How stands the case before us? Let the Council of Trent be the first witness. That celebrated assembly has decreed largely on this subject. It has defined, and, as Romanists contend, infallibly defined,

what is Scripture; what versions of Scripture may be used; by what descriptions of persons these versions may be used; how such persons are to be discriminated from the multitude; and on what conditions they may be permitted to read the Holy Scriptures. It has also defined the restrictions under which interpreters and expositors of Scripture must proceed in their work.

The Council of Trent reckons apocryphal books among the canonical books of Holy Scripture. (Sess. 4.) On this point you will remember, Sir, that a former council (that of Laodicea), equally œcumenical, and, as every consistent Romanist must maintain, equally infallible with the Council of Trent, decreed that the canonical books alone compose the Holy Scriptures*. So that on this fundamental question, what is Scripture, we find one infallible tribunal contradicting another infallible tribunal; and we naturally ask, where is the ultra infallible umpire to settle this dispute between the infallible combatants? The Council of Trent has decreed that tradition is to be received with sentiments of equal piety and reverence with the Scripture (*pari pietatis affectu ac reverentiâ*). The Scripture of the Romanist, therefore, according to the Council of Trent, consists of these three things—the Bible, the Apocrypha, and Tradition. In describing the versions of the Bible in the vulgar tongue, which may be used, the Council of Trent has

* Can. 59, 60, apud Lardner, vol. iv. pp. 308, 309.

decreed, that they must be those only which have been approved by the Holy See, or edited with notes taken from the holy fathers, or from learned and catholic men*. It is worthy of remark, that your Church has, at this moment, no Bible which she can use or circulate, without incurring a sentence of excommunication from one of her Popes. Her standard is the Latin Vulgate, as it is called; from this her last modern translations have been made, and not from the Greek or Hebrew, which her councils have not sanctioned or recognized at all. But what is this Vulgate? The two principal editions of the Vulgate are those of Pope Sixtus V. and Pope Clement VIII. The former was printed in 1590, after Pope Sixtus had collected the most ancient manuscripts and best printed copies, summoned the most learned men out of all the nations of the Christian world, and presided over the whole himself. This edition was declared to be corrected in the very best manner possible, and published with an authoritative excommunication of every person who should presume ever afterwards to alter the least particle of the edition thus authentically promulgated by his Holiness.

* "Quod si hujusmodi Bibliorum versiones vulgari linguâ fuerint ab Apostolicâ Sede approbatæ, aut editæ cum annotationibus sumptis ex sanctis patribus, vel ex doctis catholicis-que viris, *conceduntur.*"

This rule extends to books of controversy, "*Libri de controversiis . . . non passim permittuntur, sed idem de iis servetur, quod de Bibliis vulgari linguâ scriptis statutum est.*"

ness. sitting in that chair, "*in quâ Petri vivit potestas, et excellit auctoritas.*" The other edition was published in 1592, by Pope Clement VIII. It was so different from that of Sixtus, as to contain two thousand variations, some of whole verses, and many others clearly and designedly contradictory in sense; and yet this edition also is pronounced authentic, and enforced with the same sentence of excommunication as the former*. Where then is the Bible approved of by the Holy See? The Sixtine is condemned by the Holy See in 1592. Any version differing in the smallest particular from the Sixtine (and therefore of course the Clementine among the rest) is condemned by the Holy See in 1590. I repeat, therefore, Sir, that you have no Bible which you can use, without incurring a sentence of excommunication from one of your Popes. In defiance of the sentence of Pope Sixtus V., however, the Romanists have made translations from the Clementine edition of the Vulgate; and the Council of Trent has determined to what descriptions of persons these translations may be entrusted, as well as by what authority these persons are to be discriminated. The persons are those who shall not sustain any injury, but rather shall have

* Kennicott. *State of the printed Hebrew Text, &c.* vol. ii. p. 198, &c.

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Such is the testimony given on this important subject by the Council of Trent: and if, in the aggregate, it amount not to a proof that Romanism throws impediments in the way of the people exercising their just right of reading the word of God, then new dictionaries should be composed, for language has no definite meaning. Against all this, however, the modern Romanist defends himself, by pleading that these decrees of the Council are not now enforced, but that, together with many other enactments of darker times, they are disclaimed in the present age; and he complains bitterly of the pertinacity with which we press upon him what he no longer maintains. Unhappily, however, for the profession of improvement thus made by some Romanists, and the anxious desire which they evince to smooth down the ruggednesses of their most objectionable dogmas, there are persons, and those of the highest celebrity among them as writers and divines; persons whom the general body extol as champions (instead of disclaiming them as maintainers of ancient corruptions, which it ought to do, if it have ceased to agree with them); persons who give a tone, an uncontradicted tone, to the generally received impression of what

Sancta Mater Ecclesia, Cujus est judicare de vero sensu et interpretatione Scripturarum Sanctarum, aut etiam contra unanimum consensum Patrum, ipsam Scripturam Sacram interpretari audeat: etiam-si hujusmodi interpretationes nullo unquam tempore in lucem edendæ forent—qui contravenient, per ordinarios declarantur, et pœnis a jure statutis puniantur."

Romanism continues to be to this day: there are such persons who justify, and (modernizing the expressions only) reiterate the sentiments of the ancient Councils*.

Dr. Milner, late Vicar Apostolic in the midland district in England, speaks thus in his Pastoral Letter of 1803: "This study, indeed (of the Holy Scriptures), is not required of all the faithful indiscriminately, *as the Church has declared*, because there are in this mysterious code things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction, and are to receive the word of God broken and prepared for their digestion at the hand of their pastors."

Dr. Doyle, the well known modern champion of Romanism, both ecclesiastical and civil, writes thus, in a letter addressed to Dr. Elrington, the Lord Bishop of Ferns, and published in the Dublin newspapers †: "There is not the slightest contradiction

* "Why do you, in your profession of faith, make a declaration of receiving in particular the doctrine of the Council of Trent?

"Because this was the last general Council called in opposition to the new doctrine of Luther and Calvin: and therefore we particularly declare our assent to the decrees of this Council, as being levelled against those heresies which have been most prevalent in these two last ages."—*Grounds of Catholic Doctrine, &c. by the Ven. and R. R. Richard Challoner, D.D. &c.*, page 74. Keating and Brown. London, 1823.

† I quote from the Supplement to the *Warder* of Saturday. Dec. 15, 1827.

between J. K. L. and J. K. L., or between him and me, or between him and the Irish Bishops, who published instructions in 1824, addressed to their flocks, and annexed to the Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XII. They are all and each of them agreed in opinion that, in this country, no particular permission is required by the faithful to read the sacred Scriptures in an approved translation, whether the approbation be by the whole church, as is the case with regard to the Vulgate, or by the prelates of any particular country or province, as may justly be said of the Douay, by the Catholic Bishops in this country, *so far as the reading of it is lawful.* They are all and each in like manner satisfied, that to them the Bishops, appointed by the Holy Ghost to rule the churches committed to them, and to feed the flocks of God within those churches, *belongs the full, free, and incontestable right of regulating the reading of the Sacred Scriptures.*" Let this language be observed carefully. First, it is not here pretended that the faithful are exhorted, and with episcopal authority commanded, to read the Scriptures as a duty; but only no particular permission or licence is required by them in this country so to do (whatever may be the case in other countries). Secondly, the translation of the Scriptures, which it is permitted to the faithful to read, must be approved either by the whole church, as the Vulgate is, or by the prelates of some particular country or province, as the Douay is. This necessary precaution to secure

a faithful translation being taken, it might be anticipated that no further impediments would be thrown in the way of an unfettered perusal of the true and lively word of God. But this anticipation would lead us into error, it seems; for Dr. Doyle informs us, that J. K. L., he, and all the Irish Bishops, are agreed in opinion, that even after an approved translation has been secured, the reading of it shall be permitted to the faithful, *only so far as the reading of it is lawful*; and further, he informs us that the authority to determine what degree of reading is lawful, and to regulate such reading, is vested in the bishops of the church, as a full, free, and incontestible right. In the next sentence of his letter, Dr. Doyle says, that "men possessed of this right, may, without inconsistency declare, that in this country, agreeably to the discipline prevailing, each person may read an approved translation of the Scriptures*." No doubt, if these men be possessed of this full, free, and incontestible right, they may exercise it as they will, either to prohibit, or to permit; and, in the existing circumstances of this country, they may judge it to be their wisdom to permit, at least avowedly, or at all events not directly to prohibit,

* This sentence is rather paraphrased than quoted. I have not transcribed it as it stands in the letter, because it is there mingled with a sneering personality altogether unbecoming in a grave controversialist, whose object is not ephemeral victory, but everlasting truth.

seeing the storm which such a prohibition would inevitably raise. But does not the acknowledged fact of *such a right** being arrogated to themselves, or claimed as a divine inheritance by mortal uninspired men, fully justify the whole force of the accusation I am now urging against your Church?

The late Pope, Leo XII., in his Encyclical Letter, addressed to his venerable brethren, the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic Church, and dated at Rome, the 3d day of May, 1824; writes thus, " You are aware,

* Had the Romish Bishops contented themselves with determining on what appeared to them to be a true translation of the Sacred Scriptures, and decreed in council assembled that they would not print by authority any other, they would have gone as far on this point as uninspired watchmen can go, without presumption. But when, in addition to this, they take upon themselves to prohibit the reading of any other translation by their people, and assume the right of permitting (as an ecclesiastical favour under peculiar circumstances) the reading of even that approved translation, they then become intolerant, and the exercise of *such* authority becomes vexatious.

The Bishops of the Church of England have observed this distinction. They have determined on what appears to them a true translation, and decreed that they will not by authority print any other. This is well. But if, in addition to this, they took upon themselves to prohibit their lay members from reading any other translations (thus proscribing Lowth's translation of Isaiah, Horsey's of Hosea, Fry's of the Canticles, &c. &c.), and if they assumed the right of giving special *permission* to their people to read the authorized version, then undoubtedly, whatever other qualities such a right might have, it would not be incontestable, nor uncontested.

venerable Brethren, that a certain Society, commonly called the Bible Society, strolls with effrontery throughout the world: which Society, contemning the traditions of the Holy Fathers, and contrary to the well-known decree of the Council of Trent, labours with all its might, and by every means, to translate, or rather to pervert, the Holy Bible into the vulgar languages of every nation; from which proceeding it is greatly to be feared, that what is ascertained to have happened as to some passages, may also occur with regard to others: to wit, that by a perverse interpretation, the Gospel of Christ be turned into a human Gospel, or, what is still worse, into the Gospel of the devil. To avert this plague, our predecessors published many ordinances; and in his latter days, Pius VII. of blessed memory, sent two Briefs, one to Ignatius, Archbishop of Gnesen, the other to Stanislaus, Archbishop of Mohilow; in which are many proofs, accurately and wisely collected from the Sacred Scriptures, and from tradition, to show how noxious this most wicked novelty is both to faith and morals. We also, venerable Brethren, in conformity with our apostolic duty, exhort you to turn away your flock, by all means, from these poisonous pastures. Reprove, beseech, be instant in season and out of season in all patience and doctrine, that the faithful entrusted to you, adhering strictly to the rules of our congregation of the Index, be persuaded, that if the Sacred Scriptures be every where indiscriminately

published, more evil than advantage will arise thence, on account of the rashness of men: or, as the Romish Bishops in Ireland quote it, in their pastoral instructions to their clergy and people, "on account of the malice or infirmity of men *."

* Non vos latet V V. F F., Societatem quamdam dictam vulgò Biblicam per totum orbem audacter vagari, quæ spretis S. S. Patrum Traditionibus, et contra notissimum Tridentini Consilii Decretum, in id collatis viribus, ac modis omnibus intendit, ut in vulgares linguas Nationum omnium, Sacra vertantur, vel potius pervertantur Biblia. Ex quo valde pertimescendum est, ne sicut in aliquibus jam notis, ita et in cæteris, interpretatione perversa de Evangelio Christi hominis fiat Evangelium, aut quod pejus est Diaboli. Ad quam pestem advertendam, Prædecessores nostri, plures ediderunt Constitutiones, et extremis diebus Sanctæ Recordationis Pius VII. duo dedit Brevia, alterum Ignatio Archiepiscopo Gnesnensi, alterum Stanislao Archiepiscopo Mohiloriensi, in quibus multa ex divinis Litteris et ex Traditione accurate, ac sapienter excerpta inveniuntur, ut ostendatur quantopere Fidei et moribus vaferimum hoc inventum noxium sit. Nos quoque pro Apostolico Nostro munere hortamur vos V V. F F. ut Gregem Vestrum a *lethiferis hisce pascuis* amovere omnimode satagatis. Arguite, obsecrate, instate opportune, importune in omni patientia et doctrina, ut Fideles Vestri Regulis nostræ Indicis Congregationis adamussim inhærentes sibi persuadeant "si Sacra Biblia vulgari lingua passim sine discrimine permittantur, plus inde ob hominum temeritatem detrimenti, quam utilitatis oriri."

For an explanation of the Rules of the Congregation of the Index, here alluded to by the Pope, see page 54 of the Pastoral Instructions of the Romish Bishops in Ireland, annexed to the Pope's Letter; where they say, "Our Holy Father recommends to the observance of the faithful, a Rule of the Congregation of the Index, *which prohibits the perusal of the Sacred Scriptures*

Our evidence against Romanism is not confined to these expressions of opinion, however authoritative and decisive. Facts speak loudly, and on this point many most eloquent facts might be adduced. Not insulated exceptions, as is pretended, to the general conduct, disowned and protested against by the general body of Romanists. Such facts would bring no evidence, and should never be quoted as the grounds of any accusation against any aggregate body. But here, facts are on record implicating the whole system; facts so remarkably in accordance with the above-mentioned opinions, as to excite suspicions in the first place; facts, the performers, aiders, and abettors of which, so far from being disowned or protested against by the general body of Romanists, have been, and still are, extolled as champions of the church; the leading themes in their eulogium being those very facts which we Protestants charge upon them as their disgrace.

For such facts, Sir, I need not revert to former and less enlightened ages of the world. I need not relate the martyrdom of Tindall, whose capital crime was the translation of the Scriptures into our native language. I need not dwell upon the persecution unto death of Lord Cobham, whose activity

in the vulgar tongue, without the sanction of the competent authorities." We have already seen who these authorities are; and we may now form some adequate conception of the bondage in which Popery would keep the Bible.

in causing Wyckliffe's translation of the Bible, and other works, to be transcribed and circulated among the people, exposed him to the fury of the Romish prelates; and whose bold scriptural declaration against the Pope deprived him of the protection of the king*. I need not detail the manifold instances of the active hostility of the Romish clergy on the continent to the circulation of Luther's translation of the Bible. Our own country and our own times supply us with more than sufficient evidence on this head.

Let the first Report of the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry, with its reluctant † Appendix, be fairly examined; and I venture to assert, that no unprejudiced examiner of this document can entertain a doubt of the continued and unabated hostility of the Romish priesthood, to the circulation of the

* Lord Cobham said to the King, in answer to his Majesty's expostulations concerning heresy—"You, I am always most ready to obey, because you are the appointed Minister of God, and bear the sword for the punishment of evil doers; but as to the Pope and his spiritual dominion, I owe them no obedience, nor will I pay them any; for as sure as God's word is true, to me it is fully evident that the Pope of Rome is the great Antichrist foretold in holy Writ, the son of perdition, the open adversary of God, and the abomination standing in the holy place."

† The Appendix was withheld, or was not ready, for half a year after the publication of the Report. This circumstance gave rise to suspicions, which were not abated, when it was discovered, that whereas the Appendix contains the evidence on which the Report professes to be grounded, the aggregate of that evidence tends rather to refute than to confirm the insinuations of the Report.

Holy Scriptures among the people. The evidence supplied by this document is the more unexceptionable, because it is evidently extorted by stubborn facts; the bias and manifest aim of the Commissioners being to make the best of Popery, daubing her deformities with the untempered mortar of false charity.

Scarcely a witness was examined before the Commissioners, who did not directly or indirectly bear testimony to a general want of information among the popish peasantry of Ireland, as to even the existence of the Bible. Mr. Donelan, himself a Romanist, was asked, "Do you find throughout the country a prevailing ignorance of both versions of the Scriptures?" He answered, Yes. "Do the children not know that the Testament is the word of God?" He answered, No. "Do you think the peasantry could, in most instances, distinguish between a Testament and any other book of the same size upon a religious subject put into their hands?" He answered, Upon my word, I think they could scarcely do it, except where the exertions of the Bible Society have succeeded; *but in many parts of Connaught, the peasant does not know what a Bible or Testament is**. Mr. Griffiths, another witness examined by the Commissioners, deposed, that "all the measures he has heard of, are of extreme violence, denouncing the people, and stating from the altar,

* Appendix to First Report, pp. 488, 489.

that if they read the Bible, or took it into their houses, they should be damned, that the devil was in the Bible*."

To these might be added, from the Appendix to the Report, the evidence of his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, of Captain Pringle†, of Mr. Gordon, and others; but enough has been quoted to justify the comments of the author of a pamphlet upon this subject, entitled "Practical Observations upon the Views and Tendency of the First Report of the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry," where he says, "Experience has thus registered against a professedly Christian priesthood the almost inconceivable fact, that the Scriptures are unknown, even by name, to a great part of the body which they

* Appendix to First Report, p. 510.

† See particularly pp. 694 and 717. Captain Pringle was asked, "Do you think that the denunciations of the priests have the effect of making the parents afraid of the Scriptures as a bad book—a book that may do them mischief? He answered, I think till they see the book, and are acquainted with it, they are afraid of it, but that is very quickly removed when they read it.

"Have you known of any instances of adult peasantry, upon first seeing the Scriptures, declining to look further at it, or examine it, or take it in their hands?—Yes, I have.

"What harm do you conceive they think it might do them?—In the first place they are afraid of disobeying the priest's injunctions, and *doing a thing they must declare upon confession, which is contrary to his direction, and having penance imposed upon them*: one lad of nineteen told me, 'if we read that black book, the priest tells us we shall be visited by thunder and lightning.'

profess to instruct in a knowledge of their contents. But we are prepared to carry this accusation beyond the criminality of simple neglect. It is not merely true, that the people are left by whole provinces with scarcely any knowledge of the greatest boon that heaven has conferred upon man ; it is moreover true, that there exists a banded conspiracy against the book. From the Bishop, who publicly lauded the bigotry which thrust the Bible under the earth, with a tongs, down to the meanest priest who mutters the mysteries of the craft, there is but one feeling and one sentiment upon the subject. The malady of spiritual hydrophobia has seized upon the order, and the very appearance of the water of life is intolerable to their diseased and revolting senses. Are we to be told, that those are the sweeping asseverations of a libellous intolerance? We appeal to the facts of the case." The author goes on to state, that while the use of the Bible has been opposed, the history of profligate and treasonable adventure has been tolerated : and then gives a list of some school books, which were returned to the Commissioners, with the titles even of which I shrink from defiling my paper.

Now, Reverend Sir, what do you think? The Council of Trent has spoken; Dr. Milner has spoken; Dr. Doyle has spoken; Pope Leo XII. has spoken; an echo has been heard from the page of history; and the Appendix to the Commissioners' Report has spoken. With such evidence ready to

produce in Court, say, have I exaggerated the accusation in the indictment? Nay, rather, might I not, with strict truth, have stated it in much stronger terms than I did?

Such evidence would be sufficient against any other system, but it fails to fasten conviction upon Romanism. The construction of that system is so ordered in all points, and complete for deception; that it contains in it elements for the defence of any thing which has been said or done at any time by any of its members, if it be convenient now to defend it; and elements for the denial or evasion of what has been a thousand times said and done by its most distinguished members, if it be convenient now to deny or evade it. But though unconvinced:—she may be, and by all unprejudiced inquirers she must be, convicted of this offence, to wit, that she lays restrictions on the free unfettered reading of the Bible by her people.

Can you now, Sir, take up *the fact* in Gother's anathema, and say—"Curſed is he who hides the Book of God from the people. Amen?"

IV. Your fourth number is an extract from Bishop Challoner, entitled, "True Principles of a Catholic (*i. e.* a member of the Church of Rome), written in the year 1780." This is another compendious statement; but as it contains nothing particular, I refrain from prolonging this letter by any comments upon it.

V. Number five is an exposition of the ten commandments, entitled, "What every Christian must do, in order to Life everlasting." Extracted from the "Garden of the Soul," a Prayer Book in common use among English Catholics (*i. e.* members of the Church of Rome).

"The law is good, if a man use it lawfully," so saith the Apostle, and when the ten commandments in detailed and spiritual application are used, as we of the Church of England use them, for a ministration of condemnation to rouse the slumbering sinner from the torpor of his natural state; to rend the thick veil of worldliness which hangs between him and eternity; to proclaim the majesty of God; to convince the fallen child of Adam that he is ruined; that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified; and that, if he would escape everlasting damnation, he must fly for refuge to Jesus Christ.—When, for this object, the thunderbolts from Mount Sinai are hurled among men, the law is used lawfully, as a handmaid to the glorious Gospel of Him who magnified the law and made it honourable, and for whose righteousness sake the Father is well pleased. But when the law is expounded, and the ten commandments in detailed application set forth as what *men must do* IN ORDER to *life everlasting*; then the Gospel is wholly marred—Moses is preached, not Christ; and men are left under condemnation unto death, instead of being delivered from the curse of the law, through faith in him who was made a

curse for them. *If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.* To your exposition of the law itself, therefore, I make no objection; but against your use of it I loudly protest, in the name of Jesus Christ. O Sir, you have never spent one day in unsinning obedience to the law, taken in the full extent of its spiritual application, and if the list of performances which you have extracted from the "Garden of the Soul" be necessary *IN ORDER to life everlasting*, neither you, nor any fallen man can ever be saved. No wonder that Romanism invariably exhibits the day of judgment as an object of terror and alarm even to Christians; whereas the New Testament invariably sets forth the dawning of that glorious day, at the coming of the Son of Man, as the object of the Christian's hope, joy, and triumph.

VI. Number six is an extract from the "Sentiments of Anthony Ulric, Duke of Brunswick, expressed in his own words, when he entered upon that inquiry which ended by his abjuring Protestantism, and embracing the Catholic (*i. e.* Romish) religion."

I do not question the Duke's sincerity, and if sincerity were a proof of truth, there would be some force in this extract. But is the sincere man always right? or, in other words, is the human conscience

so enlightened as to pronounce parallel decisions with the God of truth? I am well aware of the fashionable answer to this question among infidels. But what say you, Sir? Are you prepared to join the whining affectation of that undistinguishing liberalism which neutralizes in our times the eternal verities of Revelation.

There is a man in India, who has offended what he calls his God, and who expects pardon and happiness after death as a reward for tormenting his body in the service of that God. He is quite sincere, so much so, that he will cast himself before a great waggon containing an image of his God, and allow it to pass over and break his bones; or he will shut his hand with an oath by the name of his God, never to open it more, and will actually persevere until the nails grow out through the back. Now this man is ignorant certainly, but then he is sincere; poor man, he does what he can; do not, therefore, be so uncharitable as to think he is not safe, God is very merciful. There is a man in the wilds of America, who thinks that his god is fond of human flesh, and that it will be for his happiness to gratify this taste in his god. He is quite sincere, so much so, that he will sacrifice his own child. Poor mistaken man! his superstition is, indeed, deplorable; but then he thinks it right, and the Almighty will make allowances, sincerity is every thing. There is a man in Spain, and another in Italy, and another in Ireland, who think that all must be right which they are told

by what they call the church. They are quite sincere, so much so, that, to obtain forgiveness of their sins, they will eat fish instead of flesh on certain days; they will crawl on a gravel road till the blood streams from their knees; they will repeat multitudes of prayers, some to God, some to Christ, some to the Virgin Mary, some to minor saints, all in the Latin language, which they do not understand; they will give money to have prayers said for the souls of their dead friends; and many such like things do they in their religion, thinking themselves perfectly right. True, we cannot agree with them in all this; but let us not condemn them, let us show a little more Christian charity, let us hope that God will have mercy upon them. This is the strain in which the daughter of infidelity speaks, professing, indeed, to have the glory of an all-merciful God for her object; while she tramples under foot his justice, holiness, and truth.

What shall we say then?—It signifies absolutely nothing what any man can say; but the everlasting God, the Lord, the Maker and Judge of all, he hath spoken. He, even He, that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, that bringeth the princes to nothing, and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity; that counteth the nations as a drop of a bucket; and as the small dust of the balance. Behold! he hath spoken. Hear, ye plausible speakers of smooth things, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.

hear ye the word of the Lord. *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* It seemeth right, and leadeth unto death: so much for sincerity—that cameleon creature, which it has become the fashion to idolize! On the authority of the living God, we pronounce her a blind guide, promising heaven, and leading multitudes innumerable into hell. Hear ye the word of the Lord: *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat, because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* So much for that affectation of universal charity which proudly contradicts even God himself, and says, No! surely such harshness cannot be in God; no, no, wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to *salvation*; there is more good than evil in the world, I hope the best for all my fellow-creatures. Vain, groundless delusion! O, thou slanderer of Him who was charity indeed, who so loved the children of men, that he poured out his soul even unto death to save them, and spake unto them plain and faithful things. O thou false friend, who coverest over the surface of the sinner's wound, and leavest the mortifying venom to work its work of death within; “how long shall this be in thine heart to prophesy lies, and cause my people to forget my name by your dreams saith the Lord. He that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word,

let him speak my word faithfully : what is the chaff to the wheat ? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire ? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces ?” What, then, has the sincerity of the Duke of Brunswick’s conviction to do with this controversy ?

VII. Number seven is an extract of the “Abridgment of Christian Doctrine, or First Catechism,” and contains “Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Contrition.”

Instead of calling Faith, Hope, Charity, and Contrition *acts* of the Christian, and asking our catechumens, *how do you make an act of faith, hope, &c.?* we Protestants call these graces *the fruits of the Spirit*, and exhort our people to pray for them, not to *make acts* of them.

VIII. Number eight is a list of books which you say “may be safely consulted by those who do not wish to be deceived on the subject of the Catholic (*i. e.* Romish) religion.” One of these books is “The Duke of Brunswick’s Fifty Reasons for embracing that Religion;” and as many of our readers may not have a facility of reference to the work itself, I here supply them with a specimen of the Duke’s reasoning. “For my own part, I intended to live as I should wish to die : and for this reason I came to a resolution to embrace immediately the Catholic (*i. e.* Romish) faith, because death is as cer-

tain as its hour is uncertain. Besides that, the Catholics (*i. e.* members of the Church of Rome) to whom I spoke concerning my conversion, assured me, that *if I were to be damned for embracing the Catholic (i. e. Romish) faith, they were ready to answer for me at the day of judgment, and to take my damnation upon themselves*; an assurance I could never extort from the ministers of any sect, in case I should live and die in their religion." I leave this fearful blasphemy (extracted from one of the books you recommend) to speak for itself. Surely his Serene Highness Anthony Ulric, must have been a vile calumniator of the faith which he pretended to embrace. By the way, Reverend Sir, notwithstanding your horror of the indiscriminate exercise of private judgment, and the *perplexities of discussion* consequent thereupon; yet when such an exercise of judgment and calm deliberate inquiry, "renouncing all manner of prejudices which incline men more to one religion than to another," happens in some solitary instance to terminate, as the Duke of Brunswick's did, in favour of Rome; it is deemed by you not only excusable, but deserving of a place in a useful Appendix. I now conclude with these few general remarks: if they make no pretensions to *seeming* charity, yet they actually possess sincerity and truth.

To any man who knows what Christianity is, and who has taken the trouble carefully to examine what Romanism is, it cannot be matter of surprise that a controversy should still subsist between the two

systems. They have been, are, and must continue at enmity so long as they both shall live. Their hostility may vary its aspect in different ages, countries, and circumstances of society; and may be carried on with different degrees of activity and aggression. Individual cases also may be found on either side, tending to embarrass the clear perception of the enmity. But, so long as the two systems continue true to themselves; so long as Romanism continues genuine Romanism, and Christianity genuine Christianity, enemies they must be, and enemies of the most inveterate description; one leading and persevering object of each being the destruction of the other. There is, indeed, a nominal Romanism, and there is a nominal Christianity. These may coalesce. And individuals who are supposed to belong to the different systems, may be of one mind, and live together as worldly friends in all sincerity. The one may despise the Mass Book; the other may neglect the Bible; and both may have too much liberality, as it is called (infidelity it ought to be called), to allow the concerns of eternity to be a matter of interest, or to become, for one moment, a matter of discussion between them. This, it is to be feared, is too common; and lies at the root of some of those anomalous coalitions which we have seen, and still see among us. This, however, does not in the least interfere with the state of the case, as it respects the two systems. For take a Romanist and a Christian, each a fair specimen of his system: the

one, a man who conscientiously believes the divine authority of the enactments of the Council of Trent, and is thereupon practically influenced to live and speak accordingly; the other, a man who conscientiously believes that the Holy Scriptures contain *the whole* of the revealed will of God, and is thereupon practically influenced to live and speak accordingly; and you have elements which no human alchymy can cause to amalgamate.

I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

HUGH M^cNEILE.

P.S.—You gave me no intimation of your intention to publish our Correspondence; neither did you send me a copy of your pamphlet when published, so that it might have been in circulation some time without my knowledge. I shall direct my bookseller to send you a copy of this Letter the same day he prints it. Good for evil is one of our Protestant (because scriptural) mottoes. In compliance with this motto, I forbear from printing your Letters as they were written, and allow your carefully amended version to stand.



CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER I.

Albury Rectory, March 31, 1892.

REVEREND SIR,

I have lately discovered in this neighbourhood, and amongst my parishioners, certain tracts in defence of the peculiar doctrines of the Romish Church, and I have been informed that some of those tracts were distributed by you, and at your desire lent out for wider circulation among the people.

It is not to complain of this proceeding that I now take the liberty of addressing you. Such a complaint would ill become me, preaching as I do repeatedly against the additions which the Church of Rome has made to primitive Christianity, and circulating as I do, by every means in my power, such tracts and books as I think best calculated to preserve the people from those corruptions—especially the Holy Scriptures, and the Church of England prayer-book in the vulgar tongue.

My conscience binds me to this activity of zeal against Popery, and I am bound to believe that you are equally conscientious in your zeal against Protestantism. The object, therefore, of this communication, is to invite you to a series of public amicable discussions on the several important points of

difference between the Churches of Rome and England, or in other words, between the decrees of your Council of Trent, and the declarations of our Thirty-nine Articles, comparing both with the sure word of God.

I enclose you a printed paper, announcing a first meeting for this purpose to be held in Guildford, but not specifying the time. I propose Wednesday, the 8th of April, at seven o'clock in the evening, but should any other day next week be more convenient to you, I shall be happy to meet your wishes in this respect. I propose also to commence with the doctrine of Human Merit, as held by the Roman and denied by the English Church, but should you prefer any other point of difference between us for the opening of our discussions, I freely concede to you the first choice.

Waiting the favour of your reply,

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

HUGH McNEILE,

Rector of Albury.

PRINTED FORM ENCLOSED IN THE PRECEDING.

POPERY THEOLOGICAL.

A Meeting

WILL BE HELD

*On Wednesday, the 8th of April, at the School Room,
Bury Fields, Guildford,—*

WHEN

THE REVEREND HUGH M'NEILE

· WILL TRY, BY THE STANDARD OF HOLY SCRIPTURE,
THE ROMISH DOCTRINE OF

HUMAN MERIT.

Any PRIEST of the CHURCH OF ROME, who teaches this doctrine, and who will consent to address the Meeting alternately, for half an hour at a time, is earnestly requested to attend, and justify himself in so teaching.

THE PEOPLE ARE REQUESTED TO BRING THEIR BIBLES.

The Chair to be taken at Seven o'Clock.

REV. MR. SIDDEN'S ANSWER TO THE
PRECEDING.

Vine Cottage, 2nd April, 1829.

REVEREND SIR,

I have this day received a letter, dated 31st March, bearing the Guildford postmark, and signed "Hugh McNeile, Rector of Albury." From the nature of the contents of this letter, and from its being dated on the eve of that suspicious day, the first of April, I have a notion that it may be a joke, planned by some merry neighbour to amuse us both. However, lest it might by possibility be your genuine production (and I sincerely beg your pardon if I am wrong in supposing so) I here reply to the main point of the letter, from which the following sentence is quoted:—"The object, therefore, of this communication is to invite you to a series of public amicable discussions on the several important points of difference between the Churches of Rome and England; or, in other words, between the decrees of your Council of Trent and the declarations of our Thirty-nine Articles, comparing both with the sure word of God." When these words fell from your pen, Rev. Sir, surely you had forgotten that you were writing to a Catholic Clergyman. Permit me to ask, How do you know *what is* "the sure word of God?" I know it in the way in which St. Augustine knew it, when he wrote, more than fourteen hundred years ago, "I would not believe the Gospel, if the authority of the Catholic Church did not induce me to do so." If you do not know "the sure word of God" in this way, or by the way of a special Divine revelation made to yourself personally, I am persuaded that you do not *know* it at all. And if you do know it on the Divine authority of the Catholic Church, what is to be inferred? The elements of logic

must decide. With the most charitable feelings, I advise you, Rev. Sir, to apply diligently to the discovery of "the sure word of God." This is for you, at present, "a terra incognita," an unknown land. When you shall have made the discovery, how happy should I be to "discuss" with you the best means of promoting the salutary influence of the word of God in this neighbourhood! Report says, that you possess some powers of elocution: Heaven grant that these powers may one day be employed in delivering to others "the sure word of God."

In the mean time, if you persist in inviting me to your proposed discussion, I request that your invitation be addressed to me through the medium of the Bishop, Vicar Apostolic of the London District. I have the honour and the happiness to be a Catholic Priest and Apostolic Missionary in this District. I am not sent publicly to dispute with the gentlemen established by the State, on those doctrines which are authoritatively taught by the Catholic Church. My commission is not to *discuss*, but to *teach* them: "Euntes ergo docete, &c." Going therefore, *teach* all nations.

If you, Rev. Sir, or any other person, will procure for me a convenient room and an attentive audience at Guildford, I shall be happy, when my usual Easter duties are concluded, to commence a course of public instructions on the Catholic Religion, in that respectable town. Whoever would enable me to do this, would confer on me a great obligation; and moreover would contribute to dissipate many unfortunate and groundless prejudices, and to promote the amiable and holy cause of Christian charity and union.

The abusive words in your letter (if it be yours) I freely forgive; and I am, Reverend Sir,

Your humble servant in J. C.

JOSEPH SIDDEN.

LETTER II.

Albury Rectory, April 3, 1829.

REVEREND SIR,

I am fully aware of the legitimate authority of the Apostolic Catholic Church, and of the list of books which that Church has pronounced to be inspired: but I wholly reject the authority of the Roman Church, of which you are a member.

It is because the Roman Church arrogates to herself the claims of the Apostolic Catholic Church, and thereupon teaches authoritatively doctrines which are condemned by what even herself acknowledges to be the revealed word of God, that we have protested against her as an Apostasy. And it is because some of those doctrines have now been circulated in my parish, by your individual influence, that I have addressed myself to you individually, and invited you to a public discussion.

It is possible to repress inquiry amongst the ignorant by an appeal to infallible authority, however erroneous; but when you undertake to extend your influence amongst those who know what Christianity was long before Popery was heard of (except as the predicted apostacy from the Gentile Church), you must expect a check; and your endeavour to screen yourself behind an assumed infallibility as a teacher, superseding the necessity of discussion, can only expose the weakness of your cause.

I deliberately charge you with having caused to be circulated in my parish, tracts containing false doctrines, and I invite you to a public conference, where you may have an opportunity of proving, if you can, that the doctrines so circulated are true.

I have undertaken to provide a place of meeting, and to defray any expense that may attend it; I have given you the appointment of the time most convenient for yourself, and the selection of the first subject for discussion from amongst the points of difference between the Roman and the English Churches; and I here repeat my invitation to you not to shrink from the light of fair inquiry. Truth has nothing to fear from discussion; but her deadliest enemy is a *petitio principii* of infallibility, such as that by which you would endeavour to extinguish my proposal.

I beg to assure you that I am not actuated by the smallest feeling of hostility towards yourself personally. On the contrary, all I have ever heard of your personal character is calculated to command my esteem. My warfare is with your doctrines; and my weapons are Scripture, history, and reason.

You are, of course, at liberty to consult your Bishop, or any other person you please, on the subject of my invitation.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

HUGH McNEILE.

REV. MR. SIDDEN'S ANSWER TO LETTER II.

Vine Cottage, Monday.

REVEREND SIR,

I received your letter on Saturday. Most gladly do I congratulate you on your acknowledging the existence of the authority of a Catholic Apostolic Church. And now allow me to request that you will, after a humble prayer to God for his grace through Jesus Christ, calmly put to yourself this question—Where is the Catholic Apostolic Church?

—Be sure to remember that she possesses authority “to pronounce what that is which God has inspired ;” authority to declare “*what* are Divine Revelations ;” authority to teach *what* is “the sure word of God.”

For my part, wherever the Catholic Apostolic Church is, I am inviolably attached to her : the motives of credibility concur in her support. Wherever she is, my private fancies shall be silent in her sacred presence ; never shall my erring judgment rise up against her, because she is the medium through which I know what has been revealed by God ; and with His authority she proposes it to mankind ; or, in other words, He Himself declares it through her instrumentality. Wherever she is, I am her obedient child : if you were so likewise, you would have nothing to discuss with me in the way that you propose. With such an authority as this in the world, laborious disputes and interminable inquiries are superfluous and absurd ; the time that they occupy is wasted, and the talents employed on them are abused. Rev. Sir, when there is a short and safe road to truth, why do you persist in taking, and in pressing me to take one that must be circuitous and uncertain. Indulge me, if you please, in a very humble illustration. If it were my object to go from Sutton Park to Guildford, would there be any wisdom in going round by Albury ? When the pursuers of Religious Truth are aware that there is on earth a tribunal possessing authority to pronounce what is “the sure word of God ;” when they can have the invaluable blessing of *authoritative teaching*, why should they waste their lives in the perplexities of *discussion*. Let men be obedient to the Catholic Apostolic Church, from which they receive “the sure word of God ;” let them not proudly prefer their private conceits before her Divine testimony. No, no ; begone, Satan ! Leave the world in peace and humility ; let it hear and believe. To be candid with you,

if I did not know, as I do, that I can be a true Christian without choosing a system of disputes and doubts, of ever-varying protestations and endless discussions, in that case, I should not deem it my duty *to be* a Christian; because I should then know that Christianity was not of God; could not have sprung from the *power* of the Eternal Father, the *love* of an incarnate Son, or the *wisdom* of an omniscient Spirit.

Now let me see what else this second letter contains. More abusive words like the first. All this however I forgive, as before. But really I ought to make one observation, which is this: When I find you employing such nicknames as Popery, &c., although the laws of the land and the usage of genteel society might long ago have furnished you with more becoming appellations; when I find you *introducing* yourself to a neighbouring clergyman in terms so charitable, so decorous, so amiable, so polite, I must beg to be allowed to doubt whether you are capable of conducting "a series of *amicable* discussions," although you profess to invite me to such. But there is something else in your Letter for which I have to forgive you, as I do from my heart. You have thought proper to make an attack on me personally, though I have none but charitable feelings towards you, and never injured you, nor ever will. Is this "*amicable*?" You charge me with cowardice, and with insincerity in my religion. Is this a specimen of your abilities in the way of "*amicable* discussion?" Do you wish me to enable you publicly to trample on the dictates of Divine Charity, and to scandalize the neighbourhood, by your violation of that commandment of God which shines before your eyes whenever you mount the pulpit at Albury—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour?" "If you speak with tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, you are become as a sounding

brass and a tinkling cymbal. And if you had the gift of prophecy, and knew all mysteries and every science; and if you had *all faith*, so as to move mountains, and have not charity, you are nothing." If you wish to throw yourself into the way of offending God, excuse me from becoming accessory to your crime. There are in the world persons who can discuss amicably; but your two letters would seem to proclaim that you are not among the number. You charge me with cowardice, and for your sake I am sorry to add, you charge me with insincerity in my religion, and yet you talk of your esteem for me. What! esteem one whom you accuse of being afraid to face the truth! esteem a man who is, you say, contriving a screen to interpose between his poorself and your powers of elocution! What could you hear of me to counterbalance so much evil? I could not apply the word esteem to a man immediately after reproaching him with seeking to "repress inquiry among the ignorant, with basely clinging to a weak cause, with pretending infallibility, and trifling in the name of God." "*Screen myself*," indeed! Sir, a minister of *Christ* does not condescend to think so unnecessarily of *himself*: Catholic Clergymen are not educated in any of the varied systems of self-seeking. Again, what can you mean by talking of "my assumed infallibility as a teacher?" I make for myself no such assumption; or I should be a fit subject for the Guildford mad-house instead of the Guildford school-room.

Next, you "*deliberately charge*" me with causing certain tracts to be circulated, by my individual influence, in your parish. Well, and if I had committed the horrid crime of defending myself from those "repeated Anti-Catholic preachings," and other attacks *which you avow*; if I had circulated *correct accounts of my misrepresented, calumniated, and much-injured religion*, such as the "De-

claration of the English Catholic Bishops;" "Faith, Hope, and Charity," by Bishop Baines; "Abridgment of Christian Doctrine;" "Grounds of Catholic Doctrine," by Bishop Challoner; Bossuet's "Exposition of Catholic Doctrine;" "Scriptural Evidence of the true Catholic Faith;" Gother's "Papist misrepresented and represented, &c."—if I had circulated *these true expositions of my religion*, could there be no mercy for me, peppered as I and my poor flock have been by the small shot of your "Tract Societies?" You "deliberately charge" me with circulating tracts in your parish! Surely it was your aim to create amusement when you assumed this awful solemnity of denunciation: at all events, it has so diverted me that I can scarcely make you a grave reply. So much the better. A little innocent mirth may perhaps help to dissipate the gloomy vapours that float over your fuming imagination, and to break that Calvinistic spell that "binds you to this activity of zeal against" that unreal phantom of distempered minds, which you call "Popery." I am charged then with circulating tracts *in your parish*, as if this were forbidden ground to an English Catholic; and I am summoned to give an account of these tracts before you and your followers; and that not at the place where, according to indictment, the offence was committed, but some miles off, at the county town; in short, I am to be tried at the Bury Fields' school-room (*Qu.* in whose parish is this?); and if I venture to deny the jurisdiction of the court, I must be branded as a coward and a hypocrite. But, supposing me not to be contumacious, but to appear and take my trial, pray who are to be judges? yourself, and the unnamed chairman, and the competent interpreters of the law who may be gaping and groaning around us.

You "invite me not to shrink from the light of fair

inquiry:"—how exceedingly strange that this invitation could proceed from you, when you knew that "I should be happy to place my religion under its true colours, in the view of the respectable town of Guildford, to try to dispel the clouds of prejudice which others are so busy in accumulating; and to promote, by the best means in my power, the reign of Christian charity and peace." The grand motives of credibility would enable me to prove the authority of the Church; the church would introduce me to the knowledge of the Scriptures, as the written word of God; and ecclesiastical authority, with Scripture History and reason united, would, with God's blessing, enable me to answer all objections, and to prove the truth of every Article of Faith that I profess. *This* is not "shrinking from the light of fair inquiry."

You talk of a *Petitio Principii* in my last letter; but you will look for it in vain: I did not undertake to prove any point, and therefore could not have assumed as granted a point undertaken to be proved. Little did I think of proving that I am not an "apostate from Christ."

With respect to your denial of personal hostility, I have only to observe that such suspicious thoughts do not molest my mind; I love every neighbour as myself, without reference to his opinions on religion, and I hope that you and all others do so likewise.

Your "weapons," you say, are "Scripture, history, and reason." Very sharp weapons are these! and I have often known persons to play with such weapons until they wounded themselves. Remember where you must borrow the weapon called Scripture. Seeing you brandish it around you on the arena of Bury Fields, perhaps some forward school-boy might exclaim, — "The daw in borrowed plumes!"—The armour of Achilles did not save Patroclus,

and Phæton could not guide the immortal coursers of the sun. Pardon, me, Sir, but to me you already seem like Goliath, beheaded with a sword taken from his own hand.

You observe that you “will defray the expenses of the proposed meeting.” Will you also provide a carriage to convey the poor Missionary from the field of battle to his humble cottage, which is at some miles distant from Guildford. “The chair to be taken at seven o’clock.” That is a late hour to begin business. Perhaps the sky may be dark and tempestuous; and may not midnight creep upon the eager combatants, ere they shall have finished “addressing the meeting alternately for half an hour at a time?” To crown the whole, it is a *series* of discussions to which I am challenged, a series that may be indefinitely prolonged. The Missionary at Sutton keeps neither carriage, nor horse, nor curate: his happy lot at present is to preach the Gospel to the poor. I will give you a specimen of the way in which his time passes. Every day he is bound in conscience, like all Catholic clergymen, to spend at least an hour and a half, sometimes much more, in reading the holy Scriptures and in prayer. He often passes four hours a day in instructing children; besides preparing individuals for a worthy reception of the Sacraments, and other missionary duties which frequently recur. And Sir, do you really ask me, after a day spent in this manner, to leave my peaceful home and my aged parent, at such an hour, merely for the purpose of gratifying what I must be permitted to call a whim of your’s? Is this a modest request? And when we shall have talked as you propose, till breath fail us, where will be the benefit to the inhabitants of Guildford? Of what consequence is it to them to know that the Parson has more of the Cicero about him than the Priest!—And to ask you a *Protestant* question,—when the men and women stand prepared, with their Bibles in their hands, and their heads on

ANSWER TO LETTER III.

Vine Cottage, 10th April, 1829.

REVEREND SIR,

If I have caused you a moment's uneasiness, it was in the act of endeavouring to render you a service: and this motive ought, with you particularly, to have been more than an apology: it should have produced thanks instead of censure. "There is a time to laugh;" and that time is when laughter may prevent evil and do good. The jocose part of my last letter (and it was but a part) was meant to enable you to discern the ridiculous position in which you were seeking to place *me* as well as yourself, before the eyes of this neighbourhood. Ridicule is an instrument which I employ so very seldom, that perhaps I am not skilful in its application. I wish, however, as far as I can, to become *omnibus omnia*,—"all to all:" you know my motive, and I trust at some future time you will justly appreciate it.

Reasoning and observation have long ago taught me that public disputations, such as ours promised to be, and conducted on the principles implied in your proposal, invariably furnish matter of exultation to infidels, whose numbers they tend to increase; whilst they are deplored by the enlightened friends of Christianity, "who fear God and love truth."

I objected to your challenge, on principles which you do not attempt to controvert, and which never can be overthrown. I objected to it on grounds of inexpediency; and I explained to you, in a good-humoured way, that you were trying to impose on me a series of very laborious efforts, for which my bodily frame is but ill qualified. Those who know me, would have thought me rash in the extreme to undertake such toilsome exertions without necessity.

Take notice, however, that I am always willing "to give a reason for the hope that is in me," through the *Merits of Christ*: and whenever I do this, whether by speech or in writing, you are always welcome to make a *good use* of my humble attempts.

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Your obedient Servant in J. C.,

JOSEPH SIDDEN,

Apostolic Missionary.

P.S.—I have made no one acquainted with the fact of our correspondence but my parent, who joins me in praying for you. Farewell.

FINIS.

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